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DEPARTMENT OF STATE TELEGRAM

MFG. 9/69

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ACTION EA 15

INFO OCT 01, CIAE 00, DODE 00, PM 05, H 02, INR 07, L 03, NSAE 00, NSC 10,
P 03, RSC 01, PRS 01, SS 20, USIA 12, AID 28, ACDA 16, UPW 01, RSR 01,
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P. 090916Z NOV 69

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1656

UNCLAS BANGKOK 15211

SUBJECT: US-THAI MILITARY CONTINGENCY PLAN

REF: STATE 189527

1. STORY THAT CONTINGENCY PLAN HAD BEEN SHOWN TO SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE WAS FRONT PAGE NEWS IN AFTERNOON EDITION OF BANGKOK WORLD NOV 8 (UPI DESPATCH) AND TOP STORY IN BANGKOK POST NOV 9 (FROM REUTERS).

2. ACCOUNTS ARE SIMILAR AND TRACK WITH UNNA STORY REFTEL. EACH EMPHASIZED THEME THAT MONTHS-LONG CONTROVERSY ON THIS MATTER BETWEEN ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS (OR COMMITTEE) NOW "ENDED". EACH INCLUDED REMARKS BY SENATOR FULBRIGHT THAT PLAN CONTAINED "NO SUPRISSES" BUT THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN PRESENTED TO SENATE FOR (CONSENT TO) RATIFICATION. WORLD STORY INCLUDED QUOTE ATTRIBUTED TO SENATOR FULBRIGHT, "IT'S A VERY CURIOUS SITUATION. THE THAI ARE SAYING THIS IS NOT A COMMITMENT. BUT I'M SURE THAT BEFORE THIS BECAME KNOWN, THEY THOUGHT IT WAS A COMMITMENT."

3. WORLD EDITORIAL NOV 9, "CONTINGENCY PLAN PUT TO REST," CONCLUDES THAT AFTER HUE AND CRY AND RECRIMINATIONS, THE DOCUMENT TURNS OUT TO BE ABOUT WHAT EVERYONE THOUGHT, "A CONTINGENCY PLAN BETWEEN TWO NATIONS AIMED AT APPLICATION OF POTENTIAL SUPPORT OF ONE BY THE OTHER." THEME IS THAT A GREAT DEAL OF "VERY BAD PUBLICITY MIGHT HAVE BEEN AVOIDED AND RESULTANT ILL-WILL BETWEEN TWO NATIONS HALTED AT ITS

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State Department review completed

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ONSET" HAD ADMINISTRATION HANDLED THE MATTER MORE FORTHRIGHTLY AT AN EARLIER STAGE, IN KEEPING WITH FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION "WHICH USG PRIDES AS ONE OF ITS GREAT STRENGTHS." EDITORIAL THUS APPORTIONS RESPONSIBILITY BETWEEN COMMITTEE AND ADMINISTRATION: " IT IS DIFFICULT TO BE SYMPATHETIC WITH FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE'S ATTITUDE ON THAILAND BUT ONE CAN COME TO UNDERSTAND ITS VIEW THAT CURIOSITY SPRINGS ONLY FROM THE DARKNESS...."

4. ANY SIGNIFICANT COMMENT FROM THAI-LANGUAGE PRESS, WHICH IS NORMALLY DELAYED, WILL BE REPORTED. COMMENTS SEPTTEL.
HANNAH

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